

Stephen F. Austin et al. to Andrew Jackson, April 15, 1836, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

APPEAL BY STEPHEN F. AUSTIN.¹

¹ This appeal is addressed to the following persons: "Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, R. M. Johnson, J. Forsyth, Lewis Cass, T. H. Benton, and to every Member of Cabinet or Congress of all parties and all sections of the United States."

New York, April 15, 1836.

Pardon me for this intrusion upon your valuable time. I address you as individuals, as men, as americans, as my country men. I obey an honest, tho perhaps excited impulse. We have recent dates from Mexico by the packet. It appears that Santana has succeeded in uniting the whole of the mexicans against Texas by making it a national war against heritics, that an additional Army of 8000 men is organizing under Gen Cortazar in Mexico to march to Texas and exterminate the *heritic americans* .

Santana is now in Texas, as we all know, with about 7000 men fighting under the bloody flag of a pirate, he is exciting the Comanches and other indians, who know nothing of *lines* , or political divisions of territory, massacres have been committed on Red River within the U.S. This is a war of barbarism against civilization, of despotism against liberty, of Mexicans against americans.

Ah my countrymen, the warmhearted, chivalrous impulsive west and south are *up* and *moving* in favor of Texas. The calculating and more prudent, tho not less noble minded north are aroused. The sympathies of the whole american people in mass, are with the Texians. This people look to you, the guardians of their rights and interests and principles,

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will you, can you turn a deaf ear to the appeals of your fellow citizens in favor of *their* and *your* country men and friends, who are massacred, butchered, outraged in Texas at your very doors? are not *we* , the Texians, obeying the dictates of an education received *here* , from *you* , the american people, from our fathers, from the patriots of "76", the republicans of 1836? Have not *we* , been stimulated to obey the dictates of this noble education by the expression of opinions all over these United States and by all parties, that we ought to resist and throw off the yoke of Mexican usurpation, and are we *now* to be abandoned or suffered to struggle alone, and single handed, because the cold calculations of *policy* or of *party* have first to be consulted?

Well, you reply, what can we do. In answer I say, let the president and cabinet and congress, come out openly and at once, and proclaim to the public their opinions, let Texas have some of the \$37,000,000, now in the national treasury, let the war in Texas become a *national war above board* , and thus respond to the noble feelings of the American people. Who can deny that it *is* a national war in reality? A war in which every free american, who is not a fanatic abolitionist, or a cold hearted recreant to the interest, and honor, and principles of his country and countrymen, who is not an icicle in soul and in practice, is deeply, warmly, ardently interested. In short it is *now* a national war *sub-rosa* . This will not do. This state of the matter cannot, ought not to continue. make it at once, and above board and boldly, what it is in fact, a *national war* in defense of national interests, and principles, and of americans. Let the administration and congress take this position *at once* , and the butcheries in Texas will cease, humanity will no longer be outraged by a war of extermination against liberty and maintained on the south western frontier of this nation, and the government of the U.S. will *then* occupy that open, and elevated stand which is due to the American people and worthy of Andrew Jackson, for it will occupy *above board* , the position, which this nation as a people now occupy in heart, and in feeling, and in wishes; a position which they are now defending, in obedience to the noblest impulses of the heart, by *acts* and with their *blood* , as warm hearted, noble spirits always do.

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Respectfully your native countryman and Obt. Servt.

[*Indorsement in Jackson's handwriting:*] The writer does not reflect that we have a treaty with mexico, and our national faith is pledged to support it. The Texians before they took the step to declare themselves Independent, which has aroused and united all mexico against them ought to have pondered well, it was a rash and premature act, our nutrality must be faithfully maintained. A.J.